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WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

\Ru"bric\, n. [OE. rubriche, OF. rubriche, F. rubrique (cf. it. rubrica), fr. L. rubrica red earth for coloring, red chalk, the title of a law (because written in red), fr. ruber red. See red.]

That part of any work in the early manuscripts and typography which was colored red, to distinguish it from other portions. Hence, specifically: (a) A titlepage, or part of it, especially that giving the date and place of printing; also, the initial letters, etc., when printed in red. (b) (Law books) The title of a statute;—so called as being anciently written in red letters.—Bell. (c) (Liturgies) The directions and rules for the conduct of service, formerly written or printed in red; hence, also, an ecclesiastical or episcopal injunction;—usually in the plural.

—Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, 1913

Rubric: n 1: an authoritative rule 2: an explanation or definition of an obscure word in a text [syn: gloss] 3: a heading that is printed in red or in a special type v : adorn with ruby red color.

—WordNet, 1997

Today, a rubric retains its connection to authoritative rule and particularly to "redness." In fact, professors like us who use rubrics often consider them the most effective grading devices since the invention of red ink.

At its most basic, a rubric is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into its component parts and provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable levels of performance for each of those parts. Rubrics can be used for grading a large variety of assignments and tasks: research papers, book critiques, discussion participation, laboratory reports, portfolios, group work, oral presentations, and more.

Dr. Dannelle Stevens and Dr. Antonia Levi teach at Portland State University in the Graduate School of Education and the University Studies Program, respectively. Rubrics are used quite extensively for grading at Portland State University, especially in the core University Studies program. One reason for this is that the University Studies Program uses rubrics annually to assess its experimental, interdisciplinary, yearlong Freshman Inquiry core. Because that assessment is carried out by, among others, the faculty who teach Freshman Inquiry, and because most faculty from all departments eventually do teach Freshman Inquiry, this means that the faculty at Portland State are given a chance to see close up what rubrics can do in terms of assessment. Many quickly see the benefits of using rubrics for their own forms of classroom assessment, including grading.

In this book, we will show you what a rubric is, why so many professors at Portland State University are so enthusiastic about rubrics, and how you can construct and use your own rubrics. Based on our own experiences and those of our colleagues, we will also show you how to share the construction or expand the use of rubrics to become an effective part of the teaching process. We will describe the various models of rubric construction and show how different professors have used rubrics in different ways in different classroom contexts and disciplines. All the rubrics used in this book derive from actual use in real classrooms.

Do You Need a Rubric?

How do you know if you need a rubric? One sure sign is if you check off more than three items from the following list:

- ☐ You are getting carpal tunnel syndrome from writing the same comments on almost every student paper.
- ☐ It's 3 A.M. The stack of papers on your desk is fast approaching the ceiling. You're already 4 weeks behind in your grading, and it's clear that you won't be finishing it tonight either.
- ☐ Students often complain that they cannot read the notes you labored so long to produce.
- ☐ You have graded all your papers and worry that the last ones were graded slightly differently from the first ones.

- ☐ You want students to complete a complex assignment that integrates all the work over the term and are not sure how to communicate all the varied expectations easily and clearly.
- ☐ You want students to develop the ability to reflect on ill-structured problems but you aren't sure how to clearly communicate that to them.
- ☐ You give a carefully planned assignment that you never used before and to your surprise, it takes the whole class period to explain it to students.
- ☐ You give a long narrative description of the assignment in the syllabus, but the students continually ask two to three questions per class about your expectations.
- ☐ You are spending long periods of time on the phone with the Writing Center or other tutorial services because the students you sent there are unable to explain the assignments or expectations clearly.
- ☐ You work with your colleagues and collaborate on designing the same assignments for program courses, yet you wonder if your grading scales are different.
- ☐ You've sometimes been disappointed by whole assignments because all or most of your class turned out to be unaware of academic expectations so basic that you neglected to mention them (e.g., the need for citations or page numbers).
- ☐ You have worked very hard to explain the complex end-of-term paper; yet students are starting to regard you as an enemy out to trick them with incomprehensible assignments.
- ☐ You're starting to wonder if they're right.

Rubrics set you on the path to addressing these concerns.

What Are the Parts of a Rubric?

Rubrics are composed of four basic parts in which the professor sets out the parameters of the assignment. The parties and processes involved in making a rubric can and should vary tremendously, but the basic format remains the same. In its simplest form, the rubric includes a task description (the assignment), a scale of some sort

Title			
Task Description			
	Scale level 1	Scale level 2	Scale level 3
Dimension 1			
Dimension 2			
Dimension 3			
Dimension 4			

Figure 1.1 Basic rubric grid format.

(levels of achievement, possibly in the form of grades), the dimensions of the assignment (a breakdown of the skills/knowledge involved in the assignment), and descriptions of what constitutes each level of performance (specific feedback) all set out on a grid, as shown in Figure 1.1.

We usually use a simple Microsoft Word table to create our grids using the “elegant” format found in the “auto format” section. Our sample grid shows three scales and four dimensions. This is the most common, but sometimes we use more. Rarely, however, do we go over our maximum of five scale levels and six to seven dimensions.

In this chapter, we will look at the four component parts of the rubric and, using an oral presentation assignment as an example, develop the above grid *part-by-part* until it is a useful grading tool (a usable rubric) for the professor and a clear indication of expectations and actual performance for the student.

Part-by-Part Development of a Rubric

Part 1: Task Description

The task description is almost always originally framed by the instructor and involves a “performance” of some sort by the student. The task can take the form of a specific assignment, such as a paper, a poster, or a presentation. The task can also apply to overall behavior, such as participation, use of proper lab protocols, and behavioral expectations in the classroom.

We place the task description, usually cut and pasted from the syllabus, at the top of the grading rubric, partly to remind ourselves

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	Scale level 1	Scale level 2	Scale level 3
Dimension 1			
Dimension 2			
Dimension 3			
Dimension 4			

Figure 1.2 Part 1: Task description.

how the assignment was written as we grade, and to have a handy reference later on when we may decide to reuse the same rubric.

More important, however, we find that the task assignment grabs the students' attention in a way nothing else can, when placed at the top of what they know will be a grading tool. With the added reference to their grades, the task assignment and the rubric criteria become more immediate to students and are more carefully read. Students focus on grades. Sad, but true. We might as well take advantage of it to communicate our expectations as clearly as possible.

If the assignment is too long to be included in its entirety on the rubric, or if there is some other reason for not including it there, we put the title of the full assignment at the top of the rubric: for example, "Rubric for Oral Presentation." This will at least remind the students that there is a full description elsewhere, and it will facilitate later reference and analysis for the professor. Sometimes we go further and add the words "see syllabus" or "see handout." Another possibility is to put the larger task description along the side of the rubric. For reading and grading ease, rubrics should seldom, if ever, be more than one page long.

Most rubrics will contain both a descriptive title and a task description. Figure 1.2 illustrates Part 1 of our sample rubric with the title and task description highlighted.

Part 2: Scale

The scale describes how well or poorly any given task has been performed and occupies yet another side of the grid to complete the rubric's evaluative goal. Terms used to describe the level of performance should be tactful but clear. In the generic rubric, words such as "mastery," "partial mastery," "progressing," and "emerging" provide a more positive, active, verb description of what is expected next from the student and also mitigate the potential shock of low marks in the lowest levels of the scale. Some professors may prefer to use nonjudgmental, noncompetitive language, such as "high level," "middle level," and "beginning level," whereas others prefer numbers or even grades.

Here are some commonly used labels compiled by Huba and Freed (2000):

- Sophisticated, competent, partly competent, not yet competent (NSF Synthesis Engineering Education Coalition, 1997)
- Exemplary, proficient, marginal, unacceptable
- Advanced, intermediate high, intermediate, novice (American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages, 1986, p.278)
- distinguished, proficient, intermediate, novice (Gotcher, 1997):
- accomplished, average, developing, beginning (College of Education, 1997)

(Huba & Freed, 2000, p.180)

We almost always confine ourselves to three levels of performance when we first construct a rubric. After the rubric has been used on a real assignment, we often expand that to five. It is much easier to refine the descriptions of the assignment and create more levels after seeing what our students actually do.

Figure 1.3 presents the Part 2 version of our rubric where the scale has been highlighted.

There is no set formula for the number of levels a rubric scale should have. Most professors prefer to clearly describe the performances at three or even five levels using a scale. But five levels is enough. The more levels there are, the more difficult it becomes to differentiate

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	Excellent	Competent	Needs work
Dimension 1			
Dimension 2			
Dimension 3			
Dimension 4			

Figure 1.3 Part 2: Scales.

between them and to articulate precisely why one student's work falls into the scale level it does. On the other hand, more specific levels make the task clearer for the student and they reduce the professor's time needed to furnish detailed grading notes. Most professors consider three to be the optimum number of levels on a rubric scale.

If a professor chooses to describe only one level, the rubric is called a holistic rubric or a scoring guide rubric. It usually contains a description of the highest level of performance expected for each dimension, followed by room for scoring and describing in a "Comments" column just how far the student has come toward achieving or not achieving that level. Scoring guide rubrics, however, usually require considerable additional explanation in the form of written notes and so are more time-consuming than grading with a three-to-five-level rubric.

Part 3: Dimensions

The dimensions of a rubric lay out the parts of the task simply and completely. A rubric can also clarify for students how their task can be broken down into components and which of those components are most important. Is it the grammar? The analysis? The factual content? The research techniques? And how much weight is given to

each of these aspects of the assignment? Although it is not necessary to weight the different dimensions differently, adding points or percentages to each dimension further emphasizes the relative importance of each aspect of the task.

Dimensions should actually represent the type of component skills students must combine in a successful scholarly work, such as the need for a firm grasp of content, technique, citation, examples, analysis, and a use of language appropriate to the occasion. When well done, the dimensions of a rubric (usually listed along one side of the rubric) will not only outline these component skills, but after the work is graded, should provide a quick overview of the student's strengths and weaknesses in each dimension.

Dimension need not and should not include any description of the quality of the performance. "Organization," for example, is a common dimension, but not "Good Organization." We leave the question of the quality of student work within that dimension to the scale and the description of the dimension, as illustrated in Part 4 of the rubric development.

Breaking up the assignment into its distinct dimensions leads to a kind of task analysis with the components of the task clearly identified. Both students and professors find this useful. It tells the student much more than a mere task assignment or a grade reflecting only the finished product. Together with good descriptions, the dimensions of a rubric provide detailed feedback on specific parts of the assignment and how well or poorly those were carried out. This is especially useful in assignments such as our oral presentation example in which many different dimensions come into play, as shown in Figure 1.4, where the dimensions, Part 3 of the rubric, are highlighted on page 11.

Part 4: Description of the Dimensions

Dimensions alone are all-encompassing categories, so for each of the dimensions, a rubric should also contain at the very least a description of the highest level of performance in that dimension. A rubric that contains only the description of the highest level of performance is called a scoring guide rubric and is shown in Figure 1.5 on page 12.

Scoring guide rubrics allow for greater flexibility and the personal touch, but the need to explain in writing where the student has failed

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	Excellent	Competent	Needs work
Knowledge/understanding 20%/20 points			
Thinking/inquiry 30%/30 points			
Communication 20%/20 points			
Use of visual aids 20%/20 points			
Presentation skills 10%/10 points			

Figure 1.4 Part 3: Dimensions.

to meet the highest levels of performance does increase the time it takes to grade using scoring guide rubrics.

For most tasks, we prefer to use a rubric that contains at least three scales and a description of the most common ways in which students fail to meet the highest level of expectations. Figure 1.6 illustrates the rubric with three levels on the scale that was actually used for grading the “Changing Communities in Our City” assignment. Note how the next level down on the scale indicates the difference between that level of performance and the ideal, whereas the last level places the emphasis on what might have been accomplished but was not. This puts the emphasis not on the failure alone, but also on the possibilities. This final rubric on page 13 emphasizes Part 4 of rubric development for an oral presentation with the descriptions of the dimensions highlighted.

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	Criteria	Comments	Points
Knowledge/ understanding 20%	<p>The presentation demonstrates a depth of historical understanding by using relevant and accurate detail to support the student's thesis.</p> <p>Research is thorough and goes beyond what was presented in class or in the assigned texts.</p>		
Thinking/ inquiry 30%	<p>The presentation is centered around a thesis, which shows a highly developed awareness of historiographic or social issues and a high level of conceptual ability.</p>		
Communication 20%	<p>The presentation is imaginative and effective in conveying ideas to the audience.</p> <p>The presenter responds effectively to audience reactions and questions.</p>		
Use of visual aids 20%	<p>The presentation includes appropriate and easily understood visual aids, which the presenter refers to and explains at appropriate moments in the presentation.</p>		
Presentation skills 10%	<p>The presenter speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard, using eye contact, a lively tone, gestures, and body language to engage the audience.</p>		

Figure 1.5 Part 4: Scoring guide rubric: Description of dimensions at highest level of performance.

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	Excellent	Competent	Needs work
Knowledge/ understanding 20%	The presentation demonstrates a depth of historical understanding by using relevant and accurate detail to support the student's thesis. Research is thorough and goes beyond what was presented in class or in the assigned texts.	The presentation uses knowledge that is generally accurate with only minor inaccuracies and that is generally relevant to the student's thesis. Research is adequate but does not go much beyond what was presented in class or in the assigned text.	The presentation uses little relevant or accurate information, not even that which was presented in class or in the assigned texts. Little or no research is apparent.
Thinking/ inquiry 30%	The presentation is centered around a thesis, which shows a highly developed awareness of historiographic or social issues and a high level of conceptual ability.	The presentation shows an analytical structure and a central thesis, but the analysis is not always fully developed or linked to the thesis.	The presentation shows no analytical structure and no central thesis.
Communication 20%	The presentation is imaginative and effective in conveying ideas to the audience. The presenter responds effectively to audience reactions and questions.	Presentation techniques used are effective in conveying main ideas, but they are a bit unimaginative. Some questions from the audience remain unanswered.	The presentation fails to capture the interest of the audience and/or is confusing in what is to be communicated.
Use of visual aids 20%	The presentation includes appropriate and easily understood visual aids, which the presenter refers to and explains at appropriate moments in the presentation.	The presentation includes appropriate visual aids, but these are too few, are in a format that makes them difficult to use or understand, or the presenter does not refer to or explain them in the presentation.	The presentation includes no visual aids or includes visual aids that are inappropriate or too small or messy to be understood. The presenter makes no mention of them in the presentation.
Presentation skills 10%	The presenter speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard, using eye contact, a lively tone, gestures, and body language to engage the audience.	The presenter speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard but tends to drone or fails to use eye contact, gestures, and body language consistently or effectively at times.	The presenter cannot be heard or speaks so unclearly that she or he cannot be understood. There is no attempt to engage the audience through eye contact, gestures, or body language.

Figure 1.6 Part 4: Three-level rubric: Description of dimensions with all levels of performance described.

In this sample rubric, the descriptions are limited enough that when a student does not fit neatly into one column or the other, we can convey that fact by circling elements of two or more columns. Under "Presentation skills," for example, we might easily find ourselves circling a "using eye contact and a lively tone" in the "excellent" column, but circling "fails to use" and "gestures and body language consistently or effectively at times" in the "Competent" column. When the descriptions are more comprehensive and include more options, we often use boxes that can be checked off beside each element of the description to make conveying this mixed response easier and tidier.

Seen in its entirety, the rubric for this oral presentation may seem more of a task than simply grading students the old-fashioned way. Stripped down to its four components, however, and developed step by step, it becomes a template on which to place the expectations most professors have in the backs of their minds anyway.

Creating Your First Rubric: Is It Worth the Time and Effort?

Professors who regularly construct and use rubrics can create a rubric like the oral presentation rubric we used as an example in less than an hour, less if they are simply modifying an existing rubric designed for a similar assignment. For beginners, however, the first few rubrics may take more time than they save.

This time is not wasted, however. When we first began constructing and using rubrics, we quickly found that they not only cut down on grading time and provided fuller feedback to our students, but they affected our classroom preparation and instruction as well.

The first step in constructing or adapting any rubric is quite simply a time of reflection, of putting into words basic assumptions and beliefs about teaching, assessment, and scholarship. We put ourselves in the place of our students by recalling our own student days and focusing not only *what* we learned but *how* we learned it best—that is, what expectations were clear, what assignments were significant, and what feedback was helpful. That reflection translated into classroom practices as we became more adept at imparting not only our knowledge and expectations for each assignment, but what we hoped our students would accomplish through fulfilling the assignments we

gave. Further down the road, we realized our students were not like us and our assignments should acknowledge different student learning styles.

We even began to involve our students in developing the rubrics. In so doing, we found that, as Cafferalla and Clark (1999) concluded in their analysis of studies of adult learners, making the process of learning as collaborative as possible for our students resulted in better teaching.

Moreover, although the first few rubrics may take considerable time to construct, they do save time in grading, right from the very beginning. When the sample rubric used in this chapter was used in a class of more than thirty students, for example, the time taken to grade the presentations was reduced to the actual class time in which the presentations were given, plus an extra hour or so devoted to adding a few individualized notes to each rubric. We simply circled whatever categories applied during or immediately after the student presented. Aside from saving time, this meant that the grades and comments were handed back to the students the very next class period, while the memory of the assignment was fresh in their minds. Timely feedback means more student learning.

Rubrics not only save time in the long run, but they are also a valuable pedagogical tools because they make us more aware of our individual teaching styles and methods, allow us to impart more clearly our intentions and expectations, and provide timely, informative feedback to our students. Chapter 2 elaborates on these reasons for incorporating rubrics into your classroom instructional practices.

HOW TO CONSTRUCT A RUBRIC

Constructing your first rubric may seem daunting. Time consuming too. In this chapter, we will share some ways to make constructing useful, high-quality rubrics easier and faster.

First, we remind ourselves that rubric construction gets easier with time, partly because we get better at it and also because we often find ourselves revising rubrics we created for other, similar assignments. One shortcut to creating your first rubrics is to adapt the model rubrics provided in the appendix of this book and at <http://styluspub.com/resources/introductiontorubrics.aspx> to serve your needs.

Second, we break the task down into four key stages. These four stages apply whether you choose to revise an existing rubric or construct your own from scratch.

Four Key Stages in Constructing a Rubric

Whether you choose to construct your own rubric from scratch by yourself, with teaching assistants, with colleagues, or even with students (see Chapters 4 and 5), four basic stages are involved in constructing any rubric regardless of the number of people participating:

Stage 1: Reflecting. In this stage, we take the time to reflect on what we want from the students, why we created this assignment, what happened the last time we gave it, and what our expectations are.

Stage 2: Listing. In this stage, we focus on the particular details of the assignment and what specific learning objectives we hope to see in the completed assignment.

Stage 3: Grouping and Labeling. In this stage, we organize the results of our reflections in Stages 1 and 2, grouping similar

expectations together in what will probably become the rubric dimensions.

Stage 4: Application. In this stage, we apply the dimensions and descriptions from Stage 3 to the final form of the rubric, using the grid formats shown in Chapter 1 or in the appendix.

In this chapter, we will show each step in each stage of rubric construction in detail, using examples from both a freshman core course and a graduate seminar. We do this to show how rubrics are drawn from and integral to our overall teaching goals and methods of instruction and to suggest some of the adaptations that may be necessary in different disciplines and at different levels of higher education.

Stage 1: Reflecting

In Stage 1, reflecting, we reflect not only on the assignment but also on the overall course objectives for this particular class. Moon (1999) defines reflection simply as a “mental process with purpose and/or outcome” (p. 5). Whether it is called “reflection” or something else, this kind of focused thinking is a part of every discipline. Even though the way we reflect may be different, the purpose is the same. All of us journal, meditate, draw mind maps, create outlines, make lists, analyze data, synthesize results, or engage in any number of personal or professional forms of reflection. All of us reflect prior to beginning a scholarly task such writing or creating a new lecture or class plan.

Constructing a rubric requires reflection on our overall class objectives, the assignment itself, its purposes, the task objectives, and students’ prior knowledge, as well as our own previous experience with this type of assignment. The kind of reflection we all already do is easily adapted to rubric construction.

To begin a fruitful rubric reflection for any level, we have found it useful to focus on eight questions geared toward focusing our minds on what we already know but may never have articulated:

1. *Why did you create this assignment?* Think back to a previous reflective period, the one you engaged in before or as you wrote your syllabus. Is this assignment primarily designed to push the students to absorb as much content knowledge as possible (e.g., an exam), to develop a learning skill such as critical

thinking (e.g., a paper or critique), or to involve students in some sort of experiential learning (e.g., a lab, workshop, or performance)?

2. *Have you given this assignment or a similar assignment before?*

What happened the last time you gave this or a similar assignment? What questions did the students ask about this assignment before and after they completed it? Were you pleased or displeased with the general result? What particularly satisfactory results can you recall? What particularly disappointing results can you recall? Are there any changes you can make to the task assignment to improve your chances of getting the same satisfactory results and avoiding the same pitfalls?

3. *How does this assignment relate to the rest of what you are teaching?*

In what ways does it relate to other assignments? How important is it to the completion of future assignments that students complete this task successfully? How important is it to your discipline or their scholarly lives as a whole that they do well on this assignment?

4. *What skills will students need to have or develop to successfully complete this assignment?*

Do they already have such skills and need to develop them further, or are they starting from scratch? Is the class mixed in terms of their existing capabilities? What, if anything, do you want to do about their skill levels? Is demonstrating one or more of these skills more important to you than others?

5. *What exactly is the task assigned?*

Does it break down into a variety of different tasks? Are one or more of these component tasks more important than others? How can/will you explain the breakdown and nature of these component tasks to the students?

6. *What evidence can students provide in this assignment that would show they have accomplished what you hoped they would accomplish when you created the assignment?*

What different kinds of evidence might students use to demonstrate their knowledge and skills?

7. *What are the highest expectations you have for student performance on this assignment overall?*

What does an exemplary product look like?

8. *What is the worst fulfillment of the assignment you can imagine, short of simply not turning it in at all?* Where have students fallen short on the completion of similar assignments in the past? What are some of the pitfalls you might help your students to avoid this time?

We find it helps to write down the answers to these questions, but whether you do or not, the answers should supply the “big picture”—that is, the context of the assignment in the larger context of the class and your overall objectives. The answers should help you decide what kind of rubric will best serve your needs and the needs of your students. They should also help you decide whether you will construct your rubric from scratch or whether one of your old rubrics or a model rubric from this book or elsewhere can be adapted. These answers should also generate ideas that help you construct a high-quality rubric that communicates your expectations clearly to the students.

Stage 2: Listing

In Stage 2, listing, we turn our attention to describing how to capture the details of this assignment. We ask ourselves what specific learning objectives we hope will be accomplished with the completion of this assignment. The objectives will vary according to the overall course objectives, the nature of the task, the grade level of the students, and our experience in giving and grading this assignment in the past. In particular, the answers to Questions 4, 5, and 6 regarding skills required, the exact nature of the task, and the types of evidence of learning are most often our starting point in generating this list. Your choice of key questions may vary.

Whichever questions you choose, the answers can be used to create a new list of the most important (to you) learning objectives you expect students to accomplish by completing the task. As with writing, lecture preparation, or other scholarly tasks, the initial lists are apt to be messy accumulations of half-formed and even repetitious ideas to be refined, reorganized, and probably added to as you progress.

Lists of learning objectives can vary tremendously, even in classes that seem very similar and that are taught by the same professor. In the

examples that follow, we have included lists from two rather similar assignments taught by the same professor: oral presentations comparing and contrasting Japanese and American film versions of World War II. One of these, however, was a group project for a freshman core class designed to promote basic academic skills and interdisciplinary thinking. The other was for individual presentations of a similar topic in a graduate seminar in history. The learning objectives vary because of the different grade and skill level of the students, the different formats of the assignments (group and individual), and the long-term goals of the two classes (skills in the former, content in the latter).

The list of learning objectives for the *freshman core class* looked like the list in Figure 3.1. Note that for freshmen, the emphasis is more on skills than content. As Perry (1970) and others have documented, students do not necessarily come to College with the skills to engage in critical thinking. Most also have limited experience with public speaking, scholarly discussion, or cooperative work. Yet to succeed in higher education, students need these sets of skills (King & Kitchener, 1994; Leamson, 2002). Many new freshmen core classes

Stage 2: Step 1

Freshman Core List of Learning Objectives

Develop public speaking skills.

Work well together as a group.

Learn to organize data and build a logical argument.

Show an awareness of different points of view including those of the presenters.

Recognize and express individual biases and opinions without letting them dominate or distort the evidence.

Recognize and understand how circumstances and events surrounding the creation of the film affect its nature and content.

Compile and effectively utilize accurate and appropriate evidence to support all points.

Figure 3.1 Stage 2: Listing. Step 1: List learning objectives. List of learning objectives for oral presentation assignment in a freshman core class at Portland State University.

Stage 2: Step 1

Graduate Seminar List of Learning Objectives

Tie the film analysis into the overall history and historiography of World War II.

Understand and use basic theories of film as presented in the text.

Select or develop a coherent theory to further explore the film in a focused, thematic manner.

Understand how this film compares or contrasts with other films being discussed in this class, especially those we have already seen.

Include and address other critiques of this film, whether to agree or disagree.

Present the results in an organized fashion using whatever visual or audio aids are appropriate and useful for the benefit of the class.

Figure 3.2 Stage 2: Listing. Step 1: List of learning objectives. Learning objectives for an oral presentation in a graduate seminar at Portland State University.

like those at Portland State University were, in fact, developed in good part to teach such skills. The list of goals and expectations for this class shown in Figure 3.1 reflects the emphasis on communication and critical thinking skills rather than content.

The list of learning objectives for individual presentations in the *graduate seminar* was quite different, as shown in Figure 3.2.

The second list is undoubtedly more satisfying to the “academic” in all of us, but comparing it to the list for the freshman core serves as a reminder of why this list of learning goals is necessary. The professor who created both lists not only drew on her experiential knowledge of student abilities at different levels, her disciplinary focus, and her theoretical biases within that discipline, but also on her understanding of her departments (history) or program’s (Freshman Inquiry) objectives. In making her list, she made the difference crystal clear to herself first, a great asset in making things clear to students and for assuring that the final rubrics assessed what she hoped her students would learn in each class.

Once the learning goals have been listed, you can add a description of the highest level of performance you expect for each learning

Stage 2: Step 2

Freshman Core List of Highest Expectations for “Develop Public Speaking Skills” Learning Objective

Clear introduction that sets out the thesis and organization of the whole presentation.

Maintains good eye contact.

Body language is expressive and appropriate.

Speaks loudly and slowly enough to be easily understood.

Modulates voice quality and tone appropriately; does not drone.

Uses humor and stories that relate to the topic to liven up presentation.

Does not fumble with the overhead or projector.

Not too many words on the overhead or PowerPoint projection.

Captions of overhead or PowerPoint show key issues and themes.

Handouts are clear.

Handouts show key issues and themes.

Figure 3.3 Stage 2: Listing. Step 2: List of highest expectations. List of highest expectations for public speaking skills learning objective in a freshman inquiry class at Portland State University.

goal. These will later contribute to the “Descriptions of Dimensions” on the finished rubric. Like the objectives themselves, these descriptions also articulate the individual, disciplinary, and departmental objectives of the class. For example, Figure 3.3 presents the set of descriptions of the highest level performance of the “Develop public speaking skills” objective for the Freshman Inquiry group project.

There was no similar list of communication skills for the graduate seminar. Graduate students were expected to demonstrate decent communication and critical thinking skills, and these were therefore integrated into more content-focused learning objectives such as the “Tie the film analysis into the overall history and historiography of World War II”, as shown in Figure 3.4.

Sometimes at this stage, rather than making lists, we use Post-its™. The ideas that would have been listed are now separated. We

Stage 2: Step 2**Graduate Seminar List of Highest Expectations for “Tie the Film Analysis into the Overall History and Historiography of World War II” Learning Objective**

The major historical issue(s) addressed by the film are recognized and clearly articulated.

All major scholarly theories regarding this issue are articulated and the speaker takes a stand one way or another.

The speaker makes it clear what theories most affected her or his approach to the film.

The data introduced are accurate, appropriate, and, if controversial, defended.

Figure 3.4 Stage 2: Listing. Step 2: List of highest expectations. List of highest expectations for the history and historiography learning goal for an oral presentation in a graduate seminar at Portland State University.

put one idea or performance description on each Post-it™. These lists and/or Post-its™ often wind up stuck all over the office in little clumps of related ideas. The Post-its™ will give us the flexibility to move the ideas around when we begin grouping similar ideas together in the next stage. After listing or writing ideas on Post-its, we color code similar ideas. Color coding helps, although by the end our offices sometimes become so festooned with paper chains that we wonder if the holidays have come early. Cutting and pasting on the computer is tidier and works well for the more virtual minded.

At the end of Stage 2, you will have your overall learning objectives listed for the assignment, and under each objective you will also have a list that describes what the highest performance expectations for that particular learning objective are.

Stage 3: Grouping and Labeling

In Stage 3, grouping and labeling, we group similar performance expectations together and create labels for each group. We start with the final lists of highest performance expectations that we completed in Stage 2. We read through this list of performance expectations carefully

and begin to group together items that we think are related. We begin to construct groups of similar performance expectations such as organization, context, analysis, and presentation. This is inevitably a back-and-forth process in which existing groups suggest other groups that make up the overall assignment, while groups, once created, may result in ideas that went together under learning goals being reassigned to different groups. We often find that some performance expectations do not neatly fit in one group. When this happens to us, we construct an entirely new group of these related performance expectations.

Once the performance descriptions are in groups of similar skills, we read them and start to find out what is common across the group and label it. These labels will ultimately become our dimensions on the rubric, so it's important to keep them clear and neutral. We try to limit them to a single word, such as "Organization," "Analysis," or "Citations."

In the case of the freshman core rubric, for example, most of the performance expectations listed in the "Develop public speaking skills" objective were grouped together in a category labeled "Presentation." However, the need for clear overheads, PowerPoints, or handouts also found their way into the "Organization" category, because caption selection and other aspects of creating visual aids involve developing an organizational framework. The need for a clear introduction that sets the thesis for the whole presentation might also have gone into the "Organization" category, but in the end it was considered sufficiently important to merit a group of its own labeled "Introduction." Thus, the original list of public speaking skills for the freshman core class wound up in three different groups as shown in Figure 3.5.

At the end of Stage 3, you will have all of the performance expectations related to your learning objectives now regrouped into new groups with labels. The original learning objectives, of course, will be hidden in your rubric but expressed through the individual descriptions of the performance expectations. The performance expectations related to each learning objective will have been separated into more familiar component skills such as "Organization," "Presentation," and "Introduction," which will become the dimensions of your new rubric.

Stage 2: Step 2**Freshman Core List of Highest Expectations for "Develop Public Speaking Skills" Learning Objective**

Clear introduction that sets out the thesis and organization of the whole presentation.

Maintains good eye contact.

Body language is expressive and appropriate.

Speaks loudly and slowly enough to be easily understood.

Modulates voice quality and tone appropriately: does not drone.

Uses humor and stories that relate to the topic to liven up presentation.

Does not fumble with the overhead or projector.

Not too many words on the overhead or PowerPoint projection.

Captions on overhead or PowerPoint show key issues and themes

Group (Dimension) 1: Presentation

Maintains good eye contact.

Body language is expressive & appropriate.

Speaks loudly & slowly enough to be easily understood.

Modulates voice quality & tone appropriately.

Does not fumble with the overhead or projector.

Group (Dimension) 2: Organization

Captions of overhead or PowerPoint show key issues and themes.

Handouts are clear.

Handouts show key issues and themes.

Uses humor and stories that relate to the topic to illustrate, support, and liven up presentation.

Group (Dimension) 3: Introduction

Clear introduction that sets out the thesis and organization of the whole presentation.

Figure 3.5 Stage 3: Grouping and Labeling. List of highest expectations moved into three groups that become rubric dimensions.

Stage 4: Application

In Stage 4: Application, we transfer our lists and groupings to a rubric grid. The labels for the groups of performance expectations now become the dimensions of the rubric and are placed in the left column of the rubric grid, while many of our earlier lists of learning and task objectives find their way into the descriptions of the highest level of performance for each dimension. In the case of the graduate seminar, the process stopped there with the creation of a scoring guide rubric.

Construction of a Scoring Guide Rubric

In the case of the graduate seminar described earlier, the professor decided to create a scoring guide rubric rather than a three-to-five-level rubric. A scoring guide rubric lists only one set of criteria: the

highest possible performance for each category. Individualized notes then tell students how completely they did or did not meet that criterion. Scoring guide rubrics require more grading time than three-to-five-level rubrics, but they are still faster to use for feedback than handwritten notes because we can reference what was left out without having to rewrite it each and every time. Scoring guide rubrics work best for assignments in which students are allowed greater flexibility of approach; in this case, they had the option of focusing on film theory or historical theory. For this reason, these theoretical frameworks were grouped together under the "Context" category, although they had originally been quite separate in terms of learning goals. The need to discuss the historical issues addressed by the film (it was a history class, after all) regardless of the theoretical approach found its way into both the "Introduction" category and the "Evidence" dimension.

Scoring guide rubrics provide greater flexibility of response and can make grading something that is happening rapidly (like an oral presentation) more organized and easier and quicker to grade when the work is good; they therefore fulfill most of the highest expectations spelled out in the scoring guide rubric. Scoring guide rubrics do not, however, save much time when dealing with a student who has to be given more explicit feedback to be successful the next time (see Chapter 6 on grading using scoring guide rubrics). Of course, sometimes just a simple "see me" encourages the student to seek the more elaborate feedback from the professor. Figure 3.6 on page 40 illustrates the finished scoring guide rubric used to grade the graduate seminar presentations.

Construction of a Three-to-Five-Level Rubric

Unlike the graduate students in the seminar, the professor decided that the students in the freshman class needed a clearer description of what constituted less than exemplary performances, partly in order to know what to avoid and partly to allow her to avoid lengthy written notes. She therefore decided on a three-level rubric with check boxes. A rubric with check boxes simply means breaking down the descriptions of dimensions into individual parts and including a box (☐) to check off beside each; this allows us to more accurately pinpoint strengths and weaknesses and show the student how he or she may actually incorporate bits of all three levels in one dimension.

Scoring Guide Rubric for Film Presentations

Task Description: Each student will develop an hour-long presentation on a Japanese or American movie about World War II designed to acquaint the class more fully with the theoretical, historical, and interpretive issues surrounding the film. Clips or other audio-visual aids may be used, but guard against overusing these items; remember that we have all seen the movie once.

Film:

	Criteria	Comments
Introduction	The introduction tells the audience exactly what to expect in terms of how the speaker feels about the movie, what theories and theoretical framework(s) she or he will introduce and what conclusions she or he will draw.	
Organization	The presentation is organized to create a logical argument and so that topics that need to be discussed together are presented together.	
Context	The presenter discusses the main historical issues raised by the film and how other film scholars and historians have dealt with these issues both with regard to this film and in general. The presenter explains where he or she stands on these issues, which theories he or she finds most useful, and why.	
Evidence	The presenter includes sufficient, detailed examples from the film and other sources to support her or his analyses.	
Analysis	The presenter uses her or his evidence to support a consistent, coherent analysis of how the film does or does not contribute to our understanding of World War II.	
Presentation	The presenter spoke clearly, slowly, loudly enough to be heard, but not too loudly; used appropriate, effective gestures and body language; and maintained eye contact with the class. Audio-visual aids, if used, are technically sound (to prevent fumbling with equipment), appropriate, and referenced in the presentation.	

Figure 3.6 Stage 4: Application. Groups placed on a scoring guide rubric listing only highest level of expectations for an oral presentation for a graduate seminar at Portland State University.

As we noted in Chapter 1, labeling the levels on the scale can be a delicate matter. We need to be clear about expectations and about failures as well as successes, yet we also try to avoid overly negative or competitive labels. These can discourage students. We have found that the best way to avoid overly negative scale labels is to remember that one major purpose of our rubric is to demonstrate for our students the steps toward an exemplary performance. In the case of the three-level rubric for the Freshman Inquiry group project, the professor considered the following options

- Exemplary, competent, beginning
- Proficient, intermediate, novice
- Exemplary, competent, not yet competent
- Excellent, good, developing
- 1, 2, 3
- Strong, satisfactory, weak

Eventually she settled on “Exemplary,” “Competent,” and “Developing” as the labels for each level of performance and placed these on the horizontal upper bar of the grid. Then, using her lists and groups from Stage 3, grouping and labeling, she added the “Dimensions” to the vertical side of the grid. Finally, she inserted the descriptions of the highest level of performance in each dimension to the appropriate place in the “Exemplary” column of the grid. The initial grid is shown in Figure 3.7 on page 42.

To complete the grid and the descriptions of the other levels, we find it easiest to fill in the lowest performance descriptions next. Because they are the lowest task expectations, these descriptions are often simply the negation of the exemplary task description, in which case, we can actually cut and paste the exemplary description and then edit it accordingly. In other cases, however, the lowest performance description is not a direct opposite, but a list of the typical mistakes that we have seen students commit over the years. It is sadly easy to define a very low performance.

This was certainly the case with the Freshman Inquiry rubric. In fact, it looked like Figure 3.8 on page 43, once the “Developing” descriptions of each dimension were filled in.

Rubric for Film Presentation

Task Description: Working in groups of four or five, students will develop and present to the class an analysis of a Japanese movie about World War II. This analysis should go beyond a simple synopsis of the movie to discuss how well or poorly the film reflects a particular point of view about the war. You are expected to do additional research to develop this presentation and to use visual aids of some sort. All group members are expected to participate in the presentation.

	Exemplary	Competent	Developing
Individual presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> The presenter spoke clearly, slowly, and loudly enough to be heard without shouting, modulating voice tone and quality. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used expressive, appropriate body language and maintained eye contact with the audience. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used all the time allotted but did not speak too long. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used humor and anecdotes appropriately to liven up and illustrate the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter or an assistant competently handled the equipment.		
Group work	<input type="checkbox"/> The presentation allowed each member an equal opportunity to shine. <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentations followed one another in a way that promoted a logical discussion of the topic, and connections between individual presentations were clearly shown. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members treated each other with courtesy and respect. <input type="checkbox"/> The technologies used to illustrate and assist the presentation were appropriate and competently handled without any fumbling.		
Introduction	<input type="checkbox"/> The thesis is clearly stated at the beginning and carried through in the rest of the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> The topics to be covered are introduced and the direction the overall presentation will take is made clear.		
Individual organization	<input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentation was well organized in itself with an introduction, body, and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> That organization was emphasized and made clear to the audience through the use of appropriately captioned PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts.		
Individual content	<input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were detailed, accurate, and appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Theories referenced were accurately described and appropriately used. <input type="checkbox"/> Analyses, discussions, and conclusions were explicitly linked to examples, facts, and theories.		

Figure 3.7 Three-level rubric with check boxes. The scales have been defined and the description of the highest level of performance for each dimension have been filled in.

Rubric for Film Presentation

Task Description: Working in groups of four or five, students will develop and present to the class an analysis of a Japanese movie about World War II. This analysis should go beyond a simple synopsis of the movie to discuss how well or poorly the film reflects a particular point of view about the war. You are expected to do additional research to develop this presentation and to use visual aids of some sort. All group members are expected to participate in the presentation.

	Exemplary	Competent	Developing
Individual presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter spoke clearly, slowly, and loudly enough to be heard without shouting, modulating voice tone and quality. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used expressive, appropriate body language and maintained eye contact with the audience. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used all the time allotted but did not speak too long. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used humor and anecdotes appropriately to liven up and illustrate the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter or an assistant competently handled the equipment. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter mumbled, spoke too fast or too slow, whispered or shouted, or droned to the point where intelligibility was compromised. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter fidgeted, remained rigid, never looked at the audience, or engaged in other body language that distracted seriously from the content. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter barely used the time allotted or used much too much time. <input type="checkbox"/> The lack of humor and anecdotes made the presentation dull. <input type="checkbox"/> There was a lot of fumbling with the equipment that could have been prevented with a little practice.
Group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation allowed each member an equal opportunity to shine. <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentations followed one another in a way that promoted a logical discussion of the topic, and connections between individual presentations were clearly shown. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members treated each other with courtesy and respect. <input type="checkbox"/> The technologies used to illustrate and assist the presentation were appropriate and competently handled without any fumbling. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation was seriously unbalanced so that one or a few people dominated or carried the ball. <input type="checkbox"/> There was little if any evident logic in how the individual presentations followed one another, and the connections between individual presentations were unclear. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members showed little respect or courtesy toward one another. <input type="checkbox"/> The technologies used to illustrate and assist the presentation were unnecessary, clumsy, and accompanied by too much fumbling with the equipment.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The thesis is clearly stated at the beginning and carried through in the rest of the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> The topics to be covered are introduced and the direction the overall presentation will take is made clear. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The thesis is unclear, unstated, and not evident in the rest of the presentation, which is about something else. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no indication of what topics will be covered or what direction that coverage will take.
Individual organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentation was well organized in itself with an introduction, body, and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> That organization was emphasized and made clear to the audience through the use of appropriately captioned PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation rambled with little evidence of an introduction, body, or conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts either were not used or did not assist the audience in following the organization in any significant way.
Individual content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were detailed, accurate, and appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Theories referenced were accurately described and appropriately used. <input type="checkbox"/> Analyses, discussions, and conclusions were explicitly linked to examples, facts, and theories. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were seriously lacking in detail, inaccurate, or inappropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Theories referenced were inaccurately described and inappropriately used or not referenced or used at all. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no clear connection between analyses, discussions, and examples, facts, and theories.

Figure 3.8 Three-level rubric with check boxes. The descriptions of the highest and lowest levels of performance for each dimension have been filled in.

Once this was done, filling in the middle level became a matter of distinguishing between the two; this is a bit more difficult when working with more levels, but even then, we have found that working from the outside in is the best method. Three level rubrics are relatively easy to construct. The middle level usually contains elements of both sides and some statements of degree of success or achievement. For example, in the Freshman Inquiry group presentation rubric, the professor differentiated between lapses that affected comprehensibility and those that did not. The result is shown in Figure 3.9 below.

Conclusion

Constructing rubrics using this four-stage approach does not require learning any new skills or procedures. It simply systematizes how we use the skills and talents that made us academics in the first place,

Rubric for Film Presentation

Task Description: Working in groups of four or five, students will develop and present to the class an analysis of a Japanese movie about World War II. This analysis should go beyond a simple synopsis of the movie to discuss how well or poorly the film reflects a particular point of view about the war. You are expected to do additional research to develop this presentation and to use visual aids of some sort. All group members are expected to participate in the presentation.

	Exemplary	Competent	Developing
Individual presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter spoke clearly, slowly, and loudly enough to be heard without shouting, modulating voice tone and quality. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used expressive, appropriate body language and maintained eye contact with the audience. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used all the time allotted but did not speak too long. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used humor and anecdotes appropriately to liven up and illustrate the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter was understood but mumbled, spoke too fast or too slow, whispered, shouted, or droned; intelligibility, however, was not compromised. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter's body language did not distract significantly, but the presenter fidgeted, remained rigid, never looked at the audience, or engaged in other inappropriate body language. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter's timing was too long or too brief. <input type="checkbox"/> Humor and anecdotes were used, but they were over- or underused to liven up or illustrate the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment was used but there was some fumbling although not to the point where it seriously distracted from the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter mumbled, spoke too fast or too slow, whispered or shouted, or droned to the point where intelligibility was compromised. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter fidgeted, remained rigid, never looked at the audience, or engaged in other body language that distracted seriously from the content. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter barely used the time allotted or used much too much time. <input type="checkbox"/> The lack of humor and anecdotes made the presentation dull. <input type="checkbox"/> There was a lot of fumbling with the equipment that could have been prevented with a little practice.

Figure 3.9 Three-level rubric. All descriptions of dimensions completed.

	Exemplary	Competent	Developing
Group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter or an assistant competently handled the equipment. <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation allowed each member an equal opportunity to shine. <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentations followed one another in a way that promoted a logical discussion of the topic, and connections between individual presentations were clearly shown. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members treated each other with courtesy and respect. <input type="checkbox"/> The technologies used to illustrate and assist the presentation were appropriate and competently handled without any fumbling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation was unbalanced in the way time or content was assigned to members. <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentations followed one another in a way that mostly promoted a logical discussion of the topic, but connections between individual presentations were not clearly shown, or the presentation lost direction from time to time for other reasons. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members mostly treated each other with courtesy and respect, but there were lapses where members were not listening to each other. <input type="checkbox"/> Technologies were used to illustrate and assist the presentation; however, some were off topic, unnecessary, or accompanied by too much fumbling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation was seriously unbalanced so that one or a few people dominated or carried the ball. <input type="checkbox"/> There was little if any evident logic in how the individual presentations followed one another, and the connections between individual presentations were unclear. <input type="checkbox"/> Group members showed little respect or courtesy toward one another. <input type="checkbox"/> The technologies used to illustrate and assist the presentation were unnecessary, clumsy, and accompanied by too much fumbling.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The thesis is clearly stated at the beginning and carried through in the rest of the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> The topics to be covered are introduced and the direction the overall presentation will take is made clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The thesis emerges from the presentation but is either unclear, unstated, or not stated directly. <input type="checkbox"/> A clear thesis is stated, but it is not carried through in the presentation. <input type="checkbox"/> Topics to be covered and the direction the presentation will take are stated, but they are not the topics covered or the direction actually taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The thesis is unclear, unstated, and not evident in the rest of the presentation, which is about something else. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no indication of what topics will be covered or what direction that coverage will take.
Individual organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentation was well organized in itself with an introduction, body, and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> That organization was emphasized and made clear to the audience through the use of appropriately captioned PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The individual presentation was mostly well organized, but there were problems with the introduction, body, or conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> The presenter used PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts, but these were too wordy or too vague to help the audience follow the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The presentation rambled with little evidence of an introduction, body, or conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoints, overheads, or handouts either were not used or did not assist the audience in following the organization in any significant way.
Individual content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were detailed, accurate, and appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Theories referenced were accurately described and appropriately used. <input type="checkbox"/> Analyses, discussions, and conclusions were explicitly linked to examples, facts, and theories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were mostly detailed, accurate, and appropriate, but there were lapses. <input type="checkbox"/> Theories were referenced but they were either not accurately described or not appropriately used. <input type="checkbox"/> The connection between analyses, discussions, and conclusions is evident or implied, but it is not explicitly linked to examples, facts, and theories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facts and examples were seriously lacking in detail, inaccurate, or inappropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Theories referenced were inaccurately described and inappropriately used or not referenced or used at all. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no clear connection between analyses, discussions, and examples, facts, and theories.

Figure 3.9 *Continued*

from reflecting to listing to categorizing and applying. The use of these skills helps us create a grading tool, the rubric, that is advantageous to both teachers and students. By using the stages in this chapter, we can eventually streamline the process of rubric creation.

As is the case with creating syllabi and other teaching tools, most of us find that after constructing our first few rubrics, we begin to see that what initially seemed a time-consuming addition to our schedules becomes a real time-saver. In addition, we recognize that rubrics help us give more feedback, more consistently, with many more opportunities for all students to not only understand but to meet our expectations. In Chapter 4, we discuss the benefits and challenges of including others in this rubric construction process.

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